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BAKER'S EDITION OF PLAYS

BRASS BUTTONS



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A BURLESQUE OPERETTA IN THREE ACTS.

Libretto by H. N. CUNNINGHAM.

Music by M. L. COOLEY.

Ten male, three female characters, and as many as desired for chorus. Costumes fancy, but not difficult; scenery desirable, but not absolutely necessary. Written primarily for boys, particularly for boy choirs, boys' schools or clubs, it was intended originally that boys should play the female characters, but girls may be introduced in these parts, if desired, and also in the chorus. The music is easy, catchy, and easily learned. Five of the parts demand good singers, but the other characters are not exacting. The music is printed complete with the text. The plot of the operetta is inspired by the familiar enactment of King Cole in the nursery rhyme, and is fancifully developed with much humor and a satirical side glance at recent political happenings. Plays one hour and a half.

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For fourteen little girls, one little boy, and chorus. Costumes fanciful, but easily gotten up. No scenery needed, though it can be employed to advantage. This cantata primarily celebrates May Day, introducing a May-pole Dance, but it is good and not unsuitable for performance at any season. It is published complete with music, pretty and very easy. This piece is the work of an experienced teacher, familiar with the needs and limitations of children, and is offered with confidence.

Price 25 cents.

Brass Buttons

A Comedy in Three Acts

For Female Characters Only

By GRACE A. LUCE

BOSTON
WALTER H. BAKER & CO

1900

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Brass Buttons

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CHARACTERS

(As originally produced by the Decem Club, at the St. Louis Opera House, San Diego, California, Nov. 10th, 1899, under the title of "S. Sutherland Breyfogle.")

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| MRS. EVA WILDWOOD, | Miss Mabel Gassen. |
| <i>A young woman who will never on any account marry again.</i> | |
| MISS MILLY O'NAIRE, | Miss Jessica Barrett. |
| <i>Who hates men, but gets bored without them.</i> | |
| MADELINE, | Mrs. Wilbur McNeil. |
| <i>'Her cousin, who loves candy, and weeps easily.</i> | |
| MARIGOLD, | Miss Katheryn Hearne. |
| <i>Another cousin, who often takes naps.</i> | |
| AUNT FLOSSIE, | Mrs. Frank Carpenter. |
| <i>An athletic old lady, their chaperon, who plays golf.</i> | |
| MISS CORNELIA BROWNELL DARWIN, | Miss Mabel Stockton. |
| <i>A spinster of uncertain age, who has never been kissed, and loves to quote from favorite authors.</i> | |
| DODO GINTY, | Miss Ella Gerichten. |
| <i>The O'Naires' unmanageable and irrepressible maid, who went to school with Mrs. Wildwood.</i> | |
| <i>Caddies, etc., ad libitum.</i> | |

COSTUMES MODERN.

NOTE.—This piece contains abundant opportunities for local hits, which should not be neglected. Names can be changed to suit locality.



Brass Buttons

ACT I

SCENE.—*The private apartment of MISS O'NAIRE. Doors C. R. and L. Mantel with mirror L. Table L. C., and two chairs. Couch R. C. Divan C. Other furniture ad. lib. MILLY discovered playing solitaire at table L. C. MADELINE reading R. C. MARIGOLD asleep on divan C. Silence for some minutes after the rise of the curtain.*

MILLY (*at table, throwing down cards with signs of disgust*). Oh, yes, I just love cards. Of course I do. I enjoy every game of cards from duplicate whist to old maid. It develops one's sense of her own stupidity to play cards. (*Shuffling cards.*) And it is so exciting to play solitaire by the yard, day after day, and all by one's self. (*Dealing.*) Solitaire is one of those games that it takes two to play to make it interesting. You must have some one to show—how he can't get it. Not that I should like to have some man around to teach me a new game—oh, no; I'm glad at least that I'm not compelled to have one of those trying creatures hanging around me all the while, and expecting to be flattered. That would be too, too much. This hotel is a hydra-headed bore, anyway, and if there were any silly young men staying here, it would make it just that much worse. I'm sure I hope that none will come.

MAD. (*looking up from her very big book*). Why, you haven't heard of any that are expected, have you, dear? (*Yawns.*)

MILLY. No, darling, I haven't; and I can't think of any use they could be put to, if they did come. (*Playing solitaire energetically.*) I suppose we'd show more variety in our dinner gowns, and they might keep you supplied with candy. (*Takes*

up handful of photographs.) But then, you know, they always send one chocolates when you want caramels, and vice-versa. It would take at least a dozen to keep you supplied, anyway.

MAD. (*who has disappeared behind book, but now lays it down and gets out handkerchief*). Now, I think you are real unkind, dear, to call me greedy. I'm sure I always offer the candy all around before I take any myself.

MILLY. And nobody else ever takes any.

MAD. Well, that isn't my fault. (*Turns her back.*)

MILLY (*rising and pacing floor L. to R.*). No, it's the fault of our digestions, (*speaks at turn facing audience*) which get rather delicate, sitting around here with us, when we have nothing to do. (*With hands behind her.*) Is it very near luncheon time now? or how long is it till dinner time? And we eat so much that it takes us an hour afterward before we can forget it and feel comfortable again. (*Back to L.*) Then we begin to say, "Only an hour more before we can go to bed," and it is that sort of thing all the time.

(*Sits at table L. C. in deep dejection.*)

MAD. Why don't you get some entertainment out of the men who live in town, dear? I'm sure they'd like you real well, if they only knew you better.

MILLY. Thank you, darling. (*Taking up hand mirror and arranging flowers in hair.*) I have already laid myself out to be nice and entertaining to them, and all I've gotten out of them is one bicycle ride, and an invitation to go swimming. The sweet things are so busy, you know. They're always busy except when *they* want to go somewhere. (*Picks up cards.*)

MAD. But of course, dear, you are glad, because you know you just said that you wouldn't have one hanging about you all the time for anything.

MILLY (*scattering the cards about the room; aiming with precision*). And I meant it, too. I haven't seen a man for so long that I feel like a new woman. Look at Marigold, isn't she the picture of baby-hearted trustfulness? I suppose she is dreaming that something exciting has happened, or is going to happen, or is happening. She went to sleep right after breakfast.

(*Throws roses at her, C., until one hits her on the nose, and MARIGOLD wakes up, startled.*)

MAR. Oh! Oh! Where am I? Is it morning?

MILLY. Well, I guess yes. You can't kill time that way. It isn't time for luncheon yet.

MAR. Oh dear! I've been dreaming. I dreamt such a lovely dream. I dreamt I was at a dance, and I was holding six bouquets that six different men had sent me, and my programme was all filled, and there were about a dozen more men around me, scribbling their names on the back of my programme for extras. (*Rising.*) And I had a train yards long, and a diamond star in my hair, and none of the girls would speak to me! But it was a lovely dream.

MILLY. Oh, good gracious! where did you get it? If I go to sleep there in that chair do you suppose I'll have it?

MAR. Oh, no!

MAD. (*rising and coming forward*). Won't you have some candy, girls?

(MARIGOLD *yawns and shakes her head.*)

MILLY. Oh, Jehosophat blazes! Don't you mention it to yours truly. I've eaten candy almost as much as you have till I feel as if I haven't sense enough for an X-ray to find. It makes people that way.

MAD. (*goes back to sofa R. C.*). Thank you, darling. (*Offended.*)

MILLY. You're quite welcome, sweetheart. (*Rises and goes to mirror at L., picks up book or banjo, but throws it down again.*) It was really awfully nice of Aunt Flossie to bring us here, wasn't it?

MAR. (*coming to table L. C.*). So sweet and unselfish of her, for of course, it just suits *her*. Every man in this hotel is too old to do anything but drink cocktails and play golf. She is quite a belle. I saw her on the course yesterday, trying to learn the game herself! (*Sits on table.*) You ought to have seen her, dears. She hit old Mr. Rawlings zip whiz with her ball, right between his padded shoulders. I tell you it was a hummer. It bounced back and hit his bull terrier in the nose, and he caught hold of a nice place in her new red and yellow and plaid stockings, and held on tight.

MILLY (*from MARIGOLD'S chair R. C.*). Mr. Rawlings did?

MAR. What's the matter with you? You must have had some candy. No, the bull terrier, of course. Old Rawlings was so mad he wouldn't go to her rescue until the spot on his

spine had cooled. By that time Aunt Flossie had sat right down on the green, and was trying to glare the dog out of countenance, like one reads about in books, that women do with cows.

MILLY (*on edge of chair R. C.*). Or mice !

MAD. (L.). And she does it with us sometimes, too.

MAR. But the dog didn't notice or mind it any more than we do.

(*Silence, in which all sigh.*)

MILLY (*from depths of chair R.*). What's the matter, girls ?

MAD. }
and } Oh, nothing !
MAR. }

(*The clock strikes eleven.*)

MAD. In two hours we can have luncheon.

MILLY (*clasps hands*). Yes—oh, joyful thought ! You're not bored because there are no men about, are you, dears ?

MAD. }
and } Oh, no indeed.
MAR. }

MAR. (*picking up photo from table and gazing at it*). It really is much nicer not to have any here. We have such good times just by ourselves. I'm sure if a man should come to this hotel, I should let you girls have him, I'm so tired of them. It would take a Prince of Wales, at least, to interest me.

MILLY. Oh, you like celebrities, do you ? Thank you very much, darling, for your kind assurances of leaving him to us. (*Studying her photo, which she takes from belt.*) If any one comes, I'm sure I don't want even to meet him.

MAD. (*who has her candy, etc., on the sofa, L.*). Yes, it will be best not even to get introduced to him, as that will spare us that awful trouble of getting rid of him afterward. I hate to hurt their feelings.

MILLY (*savagely*). Oh, I don't. I like to. I just like to.

(*The door R. is violently thrown open, and DODO dashes in, waving a hat and hat brush.*)

DODO (C.). There's some one coming to call on you, and that's no josh.

ALL (*jumping up*). Who ? Who is he ?

DODO. Oh, it's only a loidy. (*All sit down.*) I was standing by the telephone that goes down into the hotel office, and I heard, as plain as I'm standing here, some voice saying, "Are the Misses O'Naire at home?" And then they told her that your Aunt Floss was out, and I screamed down the tellyphone, "Send her up to room 45," for I didn't want you to miss her, and I knew you wanted something to brace you up. (*Brushes hat vigorously, c.*)

MILLY. Nonsense, Dodo, we are quite enjoying each other's company, and you are entirely mistaken about our being so anxious for visitors. What did she look like?

DODO. As if I could *see* through a tellyphone. She had a nice voice though. It went way up like this, and way down like this, and she must have been smiling at the clerk—and he's *my* property, too. I'll bet *she* don't need no bracer.

MAD. (L.). I wish, Dodo, that you would stop talking about cocktails!

DODO (R. C.). Cocktails, miss? (*Holds up hat brush.*) There! I hear footsteps approaching.

MILLY. Dodo, you are getting decidedly fresh.

DODO. Younger every year, miss.

(*Knock at door.*)

MAD. Go to the door, Dodo.

(*All arrange hair, etc. DODO puts up hat and looks at herself in mirror. Knock is repeated.*)

MAR. If you don't go, I'll go myself.

(*The girls all forcibly push her toward the door, then resume original positions and nonchalance. MARIGOLD R. ;*

MILLY C. ; MADELINE L.)

DODO (*at door*). Yes, ma'am, they are at home, miss. They have been at home all the morning. There isn't much sassiety going on, you know.

(*Goes R. Enter MRS. WILDWOOD. MILLY rises to receive her.*)

MRS. W. Good-afternoon. You are the Misses O'Naire? I am Mrs. Wildwood. I used to know your aunt, and came to see her. I am sorry she is-out.

MILLY. Yes, so are we. We can't keep her at home a

minute. We girls are not sisters, you know. This is my cousin, Madeline, and this is my other cousin, Marigold. (*High hand shake all around.*) Do sit down, Mrs. Wildwood; at least, we have plenty of chairs.

MRS. W. (*seated in chair c.*). You speak in a somewhat sad tone; why is that? Ah, my dear girls, when I see you so bright and happy — (MILLY and MARIGOLD *on sofa R. C., very affectionate*) and then think of my own sad experience, although I am, if anything, younger than any of you —

(MARIGOLD *comes to table.*)

DODO (*aside; down front R.*). The idea! She's a corker!

MRS. W. (*getting out handkerchief*). It really makes me weep. Excuse these tears. I am afraid I cry only too easily, since, since—my poor, dear Reginald left me. (*Seated c.*)

MAR. (*with curiosity*). Where did he go?

MRS. W. To heaven, I hope, dear friend. I have every reason to expect so. He was a most exemplary young man. So young; and yet, older than I. When we were engaged, he sent me violets every morning. He said they reminded him of me—and so I have worn them ever since and every night we went to the theatre or somewhere,—of course I was always well chaperoned.

MILLY. Heavens! Did your mother go along too? How did—er—ah—Reginald like that?

MRS. W. Not only mamma, but papa, too. That made everything so pleasant, for they entertained each other. Of course we always sat behind them, so the dear old people could see everything—except us—and after we were married, Reginald never gave me anything but soft words. The girls all liked him so much. He was not good-looking, but he always paid his party calls.

ALL THE GIRLS. What a charming fellow!

DODO (*R., near front of stage; aside*). And that's no lie, for I used to know him. (DODO *comes c.*) Oh, Eva, don't you remember me? Me as used to sit next to you, when we went to public school, thirty years ago? Me as used to divide my gum with you; and you got so mad at, and hammered me over the head with a slate, because Reginald threw me a kiss? And as used to tell you how many times eight is, and where is Mt. Popocatpetl? Thirty years ago! I can hardly believe it, and you a tall gawky kid in short skirts then, and me ad-

miring you always, as if I was looking at a circus. Don't you remember the time when I helped you make spit balls to throw at Reginald because he sang to you—"Girls are made of snails and nails and puppy dog tails"? I was a great kid for spit balls.

(MRS. WILDWOOD *faints ; all rush to her.*)

MILLY. Dodo, leave the room. If it wasn't you, I'd discharge you.

(DODO *goes R. Girls offer smelling salts, fan, etc., MADELINE offers a piece of candy.*)

DODO (*coming back*). But I want to wait till she comes to, and see if she remembers those let 'er go Gallagher days when we used to stand off the whole school in Blackman, and she cried because no one knew how to play Copenhagen, and she rode all around the school on Reginald's high bicycle, and she was always postmistress, when we played post office. (MARIGOLD *passes* MRS. WILDWOOD *the hand-mirror.*) And Reginald wrote in her autograph album, (*to audience*) all red with blue roses on it :

"When you sail down the river of time,
Like a bobtailed chicken on a sweet potato vine,
I wonder what your name will be."

(MRS. WILDWOOD *has come to, in time to hear the last.*)

MAD. (*back of* MRS. WILDWOOD, MARIGOLD *and* MILLY *on each side*). Please, Dodo, please stop and please do go out. (*To* MRS. WILDWOOD.) We can't manage Dodo; she just manages us, when aunt is out. Please go. (*Taking her arm.*) That's a dear, and I'll give you my new purple hat; it isn't a bit becoming to me.

(*Takes* DODO *to door. DODO goes out, but thrusts her head back.*)

DODO. Does she remember those let 'er go Gallagher days?

(*All move toward her, and she disappears.*)

MRS. W. Has that disgusting creature gone? People are always saying I look like some one, but I don't. It's a case of mistaken identity. (MILLY *and* MARIGOLD *return to seats.*)

I was two years at Marlborough, one at Vassar, and was finished at Ogontz.

MAR. (*at table*). She looks it. We believe you. And where was Reginald finished?

MRS. W. By a bunch of grapes and appendicitis, you know. But please don't tell any one, for appendicitis is no longer fashionable. Even the *hoi polloi* have it now. Poor Reginald!

(*All shake heads mournfully.*)

MILLY (*L. C. with MADELINE*). It must be awful to lose a husband after you've once got him.

(MARIGOLD *returns to chair R. and gets sleepy again.*)

MRS. W. Oh, it is! I shall never forget it; and his last sweet words to me were,—“Eva, if you ever marry again, I've fixed my will so that you won't get a-cent.” Poor boy. He was always *so* jealous.

MAD. But he's gone now where there is no jealousy.

MRS. W. Oh, I don't know, I'm afraid Reg would be jealous of an angel, if there were any unattached ones about.

MILLY. But an angel is so much nicer than a man—don't you hate men? We do.

(MARIGOLD *wakes up again with a jump.*)

MRS. W. I never thought about it in just that way, but of course since Reginald's transplanting, I have never cared for men. My heart is under the daisies with him—though it is violets I always send them to put on it. No mere man any longer has any interest for me. I like girls,—girls my own age, now; and I just look upon men as a frivolous pastime, to be indulged in now and then—when there's nothing else on hand.

MAD. Yes, that's what we do, too. Won't you have some candy, Mrs. Wildwood? (*Offers candy.*)

MAR. Of course, they 'liven things up a bit now and then.

MAD. And they are very convenient.

MILLY. And it's fun to play tricks on them, and make fun of them.

MRS. W. Yes, that is what I like—to get ahead of them. (*Confidently.*) It's great fun for a lot of girls to get together and fool them.

MAD. But how do you do it?

MRS. W. Oh, there are many ways (*rapping them off with fan*), by many methods. One is flirtation, another is indifference; then you can work through their pride or through their stomachs. Take down their pride a little, or give them a good dinner—either way, you've got them

MAR. I wish I could cook.

MRS. W. But there are so many ways that girls can have good times, just by themselves.

MILLY. We're awfully glad you've come—let's have some.

MAD. But there isn't anything to do. Won't you have some candy?

(*Opens new box at table while they all gather about it. DODO sticks her head in at door c.*)

DODO. I can hear every word they say through this key-hole, and if Eva Wildwood has taken to liking girls, she must have gone through a mill with Reginald. (*DODO disappears.*)

MRS. W. (*seated c., girls L.*). Yes, dear girls, I shall be glad to tell you all I know of the best methods for getting a husband; but I, myself, am not on the market. I shall never marry again.

MILLY (*with an arm on back of MRS. WILDWOOD'S chair*). Oh, do, Mrs. Wildwood.

MAD. Please do.

MAR. (*standing*). Oh, please do get married.

MRS. W. No, I never will again. (*Firmly.*)

At door c. enter AUNT FLOSSIE, old lady with golf outfit.

AUNT FLOSSIE (*carrying clubs, etc., mopping her face*). My dear nieces, I have had the most beautiful time! (*Stands c.*)

MAD. (*at c.*). What was your score, Aunt Flossie?

AUNT F. One hundred and fifty. Just think, girls, I beat Mr. Rawlings eight holes up.

MAR. (*back of table*). Wasn't the dog there?

AUNT F. The dog is dead. Providence interfered in my behalf. Why, Mrs. Wildwood, I'm so glad to see you. (*They shake hands.*) Do you play golf? So good of you to come and cheer up my poor girls when you yourself are in such a mournful state of mind. (*Standing c.*) Ah, I know how that is, for I have been all through it myself—three times. Yes, I have buried three husbands and am still alive to tell the tale and play golf. (*Business with clubs.*) You see this

club I am using is a brassy driver. Now, my only desire is to get my nieces married.

THE THREE GIRLS (*all gathered together* L. C.). Why, Aunt Flossie.

AUNT F. Sometimes it's very hard to hit the ball—why, sometimes I am swung completely around by the force of my blow, while the ball remains untouched. And the dust when one ploughs up the earth is very disagreeable. I have the most dreadful time with my nieces; they absolutely dislike men.

MILLY (L. C.). Well, how can we help it?

AUNT F. In my young days, girls were off flirting in shady nooks, instead of sitting with each other in uninteresting rooms. These girls are even tired of golf. I believe Madeline has forgotten the difference between a mashie and a putter. (*MADLINE weeps.*) This is a mashie. My nieces have the most fearful liking for each other's society. I'm afraid the upshot of it all will be that they will always be left to enjoy each other's society.

ALL THREE. Oh, Aunt Flossie, how can you.

AUNT F. (*pointing at them scornfully with clubs*). Why, girls, it is one of the most dreadful things imaginable to be an old maid. Just remember Miss Darwin, in this very hotel. There's an example of an antiquated bachelor girl for you. How will you like it when you have settled down to paying your own car-fare, and buying your own stamps, and putting on your own wraps, all your life? With no one to fight with (*rapping floor with club*), no one to scold, and no one to tell you when the family bread is sour. (*Girls weep* L. C.) You see, Mrs. Wildwood, this cleek we use for lofting, and when you stymie on the lofter, as you do sometimes, (*walks up and down*) around the whole course, I tell you it gives me a thrill to see that ball go rolling off—off—and stop at thirty yards. (*Girls whisper* L. C.) If it wasn't for your recent bereavement, I should urge you to take up the game, but I always allowed myself at least two years to recover my usual tone, after the death of my husbands. (*DODO bursts in* c.)

DODO. Oh, missus! I've been leaning out of the top balcony looking down—I almost lost my lid off—see, it's all crooked, but what do I care? I was bound to see something and I did. Oh, give me time to get a breath. Oh, who would ever have thought it!

GIRLS. Oh, tell us, tell us, tell us.

DODO (*c. seating herself*). And to think of such a thing happening right here in this hotel! Oh, Croesus! Oh, me! And to see it with my own eyes, and hanging over the balcony until my cap might have fell off, and making myself such a spectacle for all those disrespectful bell boys to see. Oh, I am warm. I ran all the way to tell you.

ALL (*jumping up*). What is it? What did you see? What is it?

DODO (*standing c.*). I saw a man get out of the 'bus, and walk up these hotel steps just as big as life, and twice as natural; and he had a dress suit case, and a golf bag, and a hat box, and a tennis racket, and a fishing pole; and on the dress suit case was writ plain in big black letters,—“Ensign S. Sutherland Breyfogle, U. S. N.” (*All exclaim, and run out in different directions.*) Every last one of them gone down to the office to look at him. Well, for an old lady, and a be-reaved widow, and three girls who hate men so, they run almighty quick. And I was just going to tell them that I guess that other S. in front of his name stands for sweet—and he looks it.

CURTAIN.

ACT II

SCENE I.—*At the Golf-Club House. Golf clubs on walls, usual furnishings. Large table with glasses, plates, etc., etc., C., some distance back. Entrance to kitchen R. C. Door R. Window L. Telephone L.*

Enter MILLY R., with bottles of ginger ale, etc., and bundles under her arm.

MILLY (C.). Dodo forgot to send these down, so I just thought I'd bring them myself. It's dark, anyway. I passed Mr. Breyfogle, coming out of the hotel, and he thought I was a bell boy, and he yelled, "Garcong, leave me a bottle." He is so cunning! Of course, detesting men as I do, he has no chance with me. Oh! What eyes he has. I wonder if at last I am really in love. (*Sighs.*) Yes, perhaps I am. I feel like it. (*Deliberately puts down bundles and places hand on heart.*) It is a most thrilling experience. (*Picks up bundles, and takes them to table.*) So nice of Mrs. Wildwood to think of us giving this supper down here. I know we'll have lots of fun, and I expect to sit off in a corner with the naval officer the whole evening. (*Goes into kitchen.*)

Enter MADELINE R., also laden down. Box of candy also. Comes front C., and sits down holding bundles, etc.

MAD. Oh! I never met any one so perfectly fascinating in my life, and I believe he prefers me to all the other girls. His voice sounded like it when he said "good-morning" to-day in the elevator. I know he hasn't such a meaning way of saying it to the others. Oh, dear (*sighs*), what a lovely nose he has.

MILLY (*entering from kitchen ; by table*). What's the matter, darling? Why are you sitting there with such a dying frog expression?

MAD. (*jumps up and takes bundles to table*). I don't look like a dying frog. Here are those things that Dodo forgot.

(*Takes off hat and jacket and both busy themselves at table.*)

Enter MARIGOLD R., *also laden down. Places bundles on chair* L. C., *hangs up hat and coat, then comes down* C.

MAR. I wish Dodo would attend to her own work, instead of piling it all on me. And to think that Mr. Breyfogle is a veteran of our late walk-over with Spain. (*Sits* L.) He showed me a scratch on his left ear that was made by something—I forget what. But it must have been a ghastly wound. Perhaps some day he will be an admiral. I wonder what kind of an admiral's wife I should make? Wouldn't I just make the younger officers stand around, though. I know he is going to ask me to be his bride, and to send him off to the wars and be a Spartan widow, and all that; but I wish he would hurry up about it. (*Sits* L., *opening packages*.)

DODO (*enters, standing* R., *by door*). Here I am, missus, and oh, the awful time I had escaping that sour-faced old maid that's always carrying a book around—that Miss Cornelia Brownell Darwin; and you ought to have heard her asking me where I was going, and if any men were coming, why she wasn't invited, and who was giving the party. I told her I didn't know.

(*Has been depositing packages, sausages, etc., on table*.)

MILLY (R. C. *by table*). Any men invited? Well, I guess yes; and they've all accepted too. They just jumped at the chance.

MAD. I'm glad you didn't tell her, Dodo, that we were here, or she would come on down anyway, even without being asked. She is so crazy to get into society. Come here and help, Marigold; we haven't any time to lose.

(MARIGOLD *brings packages to table*. MADELINE and MILLY *are angry at each other*.)

MILLY (R., *by door*). Oh, there is Mrs. Wildwood. Doesn't she look cute in her golf suit.

(*All clasp hands enthusiastically*.)

Enter MRS. WILDWOOD R. *All surround her, taking her jacket, etc., except* DODO, *who tosses her head and glares at her* L.

MRS. W. Good-evening, girls.

MAD. Oh, we're so glad you've come, for you can tell us where the corkscrew is.

MRS. W. How should I know where it is?

MILLY. Yes, I've been hunting in all the lockers for it.
(DODO, MRS. WILDWOOD and MARIGOLD *exeunt to kitchen.*)
Haven't I, Madeline?

MAD. (*who is cutting bread at table*). You needn't speak to me, miss. I shouldn't think that you would speak to a dying frog.

MILLY (*cutting up sausage*). Well, dying calf, then, if that suits you better. You looked it when you were sitting in the ballroom last night with Mr. Sutherland Breyfogle.

MAD. (*flourishing knife*). You looked the same way, only there wasn't a man within ten yards of you.

MILLY (*waving her knife*). Oh, you mean thing!

MAD. Mean thing yourself! You are just jealous of me.

MILLY. Jealous of you! Well, I should like to know why.

MAD. It's because of Mr. Breyfogle liking me best; and you like him yourself, and he prefers me and ——

MILLY. Now, I never will speak to you again.

(*Throws tablecloth over her. MADELINE gets out handkerchief.*)

MRS. W. (*appearing from kitchen with MARIGOLD at back*). Girls, girls! Some of the young men might come in, and that would be too bad. (*To MADELINE.*) Only widows are expected to cry. (*To MILLY, who has turned her back.*) Quarrelsome girls never get married.

MAR. (C.). Oh, Mrs. Wildwood, why were you wiping tears from your eyes the other night when you were sitting with Mr. Breyfogle in a corner of the veranda?

MRS. W. (*sits down R. C.*). Heavens! Where were you? Did you watch us long? Did you see us? What did you see? (*Recovers herself.*) Why, I was just speaking of poor, dear Reginald, of course, and Ensign Breyfogle was very sympathetic.

MILLY. I don't doubt it.

MRS. W. He regards me as a younger sister.

DODO. (*loudly L.*). Oh! His *younger* sister. The idea.

MAD. Dodo, attend to cutting up those wiene-wursts, and put the cheese under the table. (*Telephone bell rings.*)

DODO. Maybe it's a bid for me.

MAD. There! Some one go to the 'phone. I won't.

MAR. What has become of her sweet disposition? (*Goes*

to 'phone L.) Hullo!—Hullo!—Hullo!—Hullo, central! This is 45187 black. Oh, yes, this is the golf-club house. I am Miss Marigold. Oh, is that you, Mr. —? Glad to see you. Oh, you flatterer. Ha, ha, ha, ha. What?— You can't come? Oh, I'm so sorry,—sorry,—s-o-r-r-y. You are busy to-night? Well, that is too bad. Of course we can't get along without you. You're such a tease. Oh, you're joshing. But I'll tell you one thing, you are going to miss lots of fun. Good-bye. Did you hear that, girls? (*Telephone bell rings again.*) Hullo! Be still, girls; I can't hear a thing. Some one else wants us. Milly, some one wants to speak to you.

MILLY (*goes to telephone*). Yes, indeed, this is the golf-club house. I can't hear what you say. You are playing a drum? Oh, you mean 'you can't come. Well, I should just like to know why not. You—well, why didn't you think of your engagement before you accepted our invitation? Oh, I don't know. Of course I'm awfully sorry, but then I suppose it can't be helped. Some other time. Yes, I'll go with you, with pleasure, day after to-morrow. I'd just love to. All right, good-bye. (*Bell rings again.*) Hullo! who is this? Yes, she's here. Marigold, some one wants to talk with you again. I'll hold him for you. (*MARIGOLD goes to 'phone.*)

MILLY (C.). Well, girls, did you ever hear of anything to equal that? I don't care if he did ask me to take a ride with him on the merry-go-round at the pavilion. That doesn't make up for his saying that he'd come, and then refusing at the last minute this way. I've a mind to cut them both.

DODO (*who has been talking L. of table with MRS. WILDWOOD, against the latter's wish; loudly*). Don't you remember what spoons you were on that red-headed boy, whose mother took in washing?

MRS. W. (*sits down R.*). Dodo! I wish you'd stop!

MAR. (*coming from 'phone*). Heber Ingle, Jr., says he can't come to-night. He is awfully sorry, but something has happened. I couldn't tell whether it was to his voice or his bicycle. (*Sits at table.*)

MILLY. Isn't it strange that they all telephoned from the same place.

DODO. I know why, miss—they're having a supper themselves to-night, up at Mr. —.

ALL. Oh!

MAR. They must have heard that we were not going to have any beer here.

MAD. (C.). Oh, dear, then we have only one man coming, and that is Mr. Breyfogle. (*Loud knock at the door. MADELINE goes to the door and returns with note.*) Oh, it is for me! (*Reads.*) "My dear Miss Madeline:—Am awfully sorry. Find I can't come down to-night. Thought I would enjoy it. Looking forward to it with all my heart and soul. I love good things to eat, but I can't come. 'Pon my word. I injured my back on the toboggan slide at the baths this afternoon, and am afraid of catching cold if I come down. Am a little deaf in one ear. Might catch cold in it. Love to Miss Milly and Miss Marigold and to Mrs. Wildwood and yourself."

"Yours sincerely,

"A. SUTHERLAND BREYFOGLE."

(MADELINE takes out handkerchief.)

DODO. Rubber!

(*Tableau of disappointment.*)

MILLY (*at table*). Afraid of the cold. And he a veteran of the civil war, too. I am beginning to think that he is not worthy of my love; but, ah! I love him still. With all his faults, I love him still.

MAD. Well, keep still about it then. (*Gives her a shove.*)

MRS. W. Now, girls, we are going to have exactly as much fun as if the young men were coming. Here is the corkscrew, and suppose we have supper.

MILLY (*R. of table*). Dodo, go home!

DODO (*R., up front*). Oh, miss, I don't want to go home; why can't I stay. Me, as loves to eat so much, and hasn't had a weine since yesterday. I want to stay.

MILLY. Dodo, go home! (*Stamps her foot.*)

DODO. I won't, so there. (*Stamps her foot.*)

ALL. Go home, Dodo Ginty. (*Stamp feet.*)

DODO. How's that for a freeze out? How would you like to be the ice man?

(*The three girls confer at back of stage, while MRS. WILDWOOD joins DODO down front R.*)

MRS. W. Dodo, if I arrange so that you can stay down here, will you promise to stop calling me Eva, and acting as if I were going to steal the spoons; and will you promise to forget that you ever knew me before?

DODO. Oh, yes—Ev—ma'am. Yes, indeed, I'd do anything if I can only stay and have some fun.

MRS. W. Here is the key to my cottage (*handing key-ring*) next the hotel. You go there and get into some of my clothes that I had before I went into mourning. You will find them in a trunk in my room. Then after you have dressed up so that they can't tell who you are, come back, and I will introduce you as a newly arrived friend of mine, and you can stay. You won't give me away?

DODO. Yes—— Oh, no, ma'am. Oh, yes, ma'am, I'll do as you say.

MRS. W. And, Dodo, don't let the pug out.

DODO (*standing by door*). Good-night, missus, as were so hard-hearted they wouldn't let me stay. I hope you'll have a good time, and I guess you will—that ain't no josh. [*Exit.*]

MAD. It was rather mean to make her go; but then she is so spoiled already.

MRS. W. Now let us have supper. I am as hungry as a man.

(*Coming to table. All gather round the table; business of uncorking bottles, lighting chafing dishes, etc.*)

MRS. W. (*rising*). I propose a toast. To the gentlemen, God bless them. May their shadows never grow less because of the suppers they have missed, and may they all get to heaven the same time we do.

MAR. Amen!

MILLY. They will, if they haven't another engagement.

(*All rise. Door R. opens, and enter MISS DARWIN, using lorgnette. All stand still and look at her.*)

Miss D. What a remarkable and disgraceful scene.

MILLY (*goes toward her*). Not at all. Won't you have some?

Miss D. On no account. "These towers shall move from their firm base as soon as I." Ah, how many men would say with me, "The lips that touch liquors shall never touch mine."

MILLY. Oh, go on and have some. No one wants to kiss you. You said, anyway, that you had never been kissed.

(*Others surround her.*)

Miss D. No more have I; but I never said no one had.

tried. Ah, you reckless young ladies, do you know Mr. Sutherland Breyfogle?

ALL (*back at table*). Do we?

MISS D. He asked me to take a *tête-à-tête* with him this evening, but in my usual entirely proper way, I refused him, and came down to seek the seclusion of the clubhouse, and read; undisturbed, my Milton. Ah, my young ladies, have you ever read that grand rhapsodian ode of his, beginning—"No one to love me, none to caress——"

MILLY (*last one to return to table*). Oh, give us a rest.

MISS D. Seeing you have no chaperon——

MRS W. (*rising*). I am the chaperon.

MISS D. (*looking at her scornfully*). As I said, seeing you have no chaperon, I shall stay here out of sympathy with your poor dear aunt, and read in that corner.

(*All groan. She ensconces herself R. C., where she watches through her lorgnette.*)

MAR. (*rising on chair*). I propose another toast. Let us drink to our ever noble and self-sacrificing guest, who, though entirely uninvited, is not altogether unexpected. May she see as much as she can, and enjoy herself as well as she will, without that usual social necessity—the men.

MAD. (*standing front*). Let us drink to ourselves, girls, in this, this sparkling and foaming ginger ale—while it has a bead on it. I propose the toast—to each other. To us—the despair of our chaperons, the mystification of our masculine friends, and the hope of the golf-club. May we flourish amiably on the family tree. May we never want for cotillion favors or candy. May our chaperons always know where we are, except when we don't want them to, and our enemies never find us at home. May our hair never grow grey, our pocketbooks never be empty, and our love for each other never be misplaced. Here's to ourselves, then, and to no one else in particular. May you never be so good you're lonesome.

(*All rise and drink.*)

MRS. W. (*all seated*). Now we must all sing. Suppose we try the stein song. I think you all know it.

(*Sing any song with dance, if desired, at front of stage, or clicking steins across the table.*)

DODO (*enters R., disguised*). My dear Mrs. Wildwood. You don't know how very glad I am to see you. (*Aside.*) Crickets! and I am indeed; she's my only hope. (*Aloud.*) I was told at your dear little house as you were down here, and finding a note telling me to come on down,—well, here I am. (*Aside.*) And don't you forget it.

MRS. W. Ah—er—this is my friend Mrs. ———.

DODO. Miss, as it please you.

MRS. W. Miss Beldon. She's from Kansas. (*Introduction.*)

MILLY (*dubiously*). Well, I guess we are glad to meet you.

MAD. Do you like weines?

DODO. Well, do I? That's what I'm here for—I mean—if there's any to spare. Yes, thank you, Miss—O'Naire.

MAD. Where have I heard that voice before?

MILLY. Marigold, give us your clog.

(MARIGOLD *at first refuses, but after much urging, complies and dances a clog. At close MILLY joins her. All applaud.*)

DODO. Well, I guess I can rag, too.

(DODO and MRS. WILDWOOD *join in burlesque dance.*)

MAR. Goodness! Do they do that in Kansas?

DODO. Oh, yes, indeed, Miss—Miss Marigold. It was a great success. (*All seated but DODO.*)

MRS. W. Why! Every one went wild over it.

DODO. Oh, everything goes in Kansas but making love. You see in love making it's never sixteen to one, and when you get a Philippino you keeps it. Now I'd just as soon have sixteen as one. The more the merrier, says I. All coons look alike to me.

(*All sing "Ma Honolulu Man," with cake walk. DODO goes about clapping them on the back; at close MISS DARWIN, who has gradually drawn nearer to the table, sits drinking, next DODO.*)

Miss D. Ah, I feel the days of my youth returning in this bright company. Those bright days when all that glitters is not gold, and I walked the flowery meads, a creature wan and wild, with form too young for a woman and face too old for a

child. In maiden meditation, fancy free. That much for Milton. (*Throws book.*) Why, I read him so much I feel like a cherubim. Hence loathed melancholy—I feel like dancing. (*Rises to feet, but sits down again.*) But, no, I must not. Cornelia Brownell Darwin you must not. Remember your age. I know what I will do. I will sing. Where is the banjo, girls? Where is the banjo, I say?

DODO. And if the old maid isn't getting right lively now. Well, I'll get the dear old thing a banjo. (*Gets banjo.*)

MAD. I wonder how Miss Beldon knew that Miss Darwin is an old maid.

MRS. W. (*rising*). Silence in the court room! We will now hear a song from Miss Cornelia Brownell Darwin. She looks as if she could sing.

(*As MISS DARWIN tunes the banjo, these remarks are flung at her.*)

MILLY. Where did you learn? In the days of '49?

MAD. Or when the new public library site was first talked about?

MAR. Oh, Miss Darwin, did you take lessons of Trognitz or Lew Arey?

MISS D. Neither. I came out twenty years ago. Twenty long years ago.

(*Sings "Waiting." Afterward all congratulate her. Then golf drill. Sing verse of some popular song to close.*)

CURTAIN

SCENE II.—*Same scene as last, but on the morning after. Everything in confusion.*

AUNT FLOSSIE *enters at door R., followed by caddie with golf bag.*

AUNT F. Did I ever in all my born days, or during any of the three periods when I was a married woman, see anything to equal this. No, I never did. (*To caddy.*)

Algernon Smith, you may sit down. Did you ever see a scene so disgraceful as this? (*He shakes his head.*) I am sure he never did. Now, what I wonder, is, who did it? Who on earth could have been here? I am so glad my own little mice were safely over at that sweet little Mrs. Wildwood's.

Enter MISS DARWIN R.

MISS D. Oh, Mrs. O'Naire, oh, my poor, dear, old friend, pray calm yourself and remember that "laugh and the world laughs with you, weep and you weep alone." (*Sits facing her.*) But you shall not weep alone, for I am here.

AUNT F. Oh, what has happened? Something dreadful?

MISS D. Yes, something very dreadful. How can I tell you? Pray calm yourself. The calm we have always with us. Prepare yourself, my dear Mrs. O'Naire.

AUNT F. (*almost in tears*). Oh, don't spare me, don't spare me. I am quite, quite prepared.

MISS D. I know who it was who were here last night, in this very room, and left it in this shocking condition.

AUNT F. (*drawing closer*). Oh, well, if it is a piece of gossip, don't keep me waiting. Algernon Smith you may go. (*Exit caddy.*) Now tell me quickly. I am anxious to know who the disgusting creatures were.

MISS D. They were your own nieces and Mrs. Wildwood.

(*AUNT FLOSSIE leans back in a fainting condition, and MISS DARWIN brings her to with smelling salts.*)

AUNT F. I believe you are deceiving me. It is a bogie sand lie.

MISS D. Mrs. O'Naire, in one regard I am just like George Washington. No one ever caught me in a lie.

AUNT F. Do you mean to tell me that those delicately reared girls of mine, who speak French so beautifully, and each know three pieces apiece on the piano, and have been out only a year, and never put powder on their faces, that they got away with the contents of those bottles?

MISS D. Oh, my dear friend, be calm—they did. They also sang loud disgraceful songs, and danced a cake-walk, and a brazen creature from Kansas called some one up by telephone and talked to him for upward of an hour. Ah! that love's sweet-scented manuscript should close.

AUNT F. (*with renewal of hope*). Oh, well, perhaps the

men liked it. Was Mr. Sutherland Breyfogle there? He is so fond of my girls—the dear fellow.

MISS D. No, he wasn't there. I have every reason to think that he refused to come, or to take part in the disgraceful hilarity. I have every reason to believe that he has the highest ideals and wishes to remain unspotted by the world.

(AUNT FLOSSIE *again uses smelling salts.*)

AUNT F. Well, what men were there?

MISS D. Not one, not one. Ah, poor friend, the leaves of life are falling one by one.

AUNT F. I wish you would stop being so melancholy; I could bear it a little better. My hopes are falling one by one, and I shall take the girls home next week. The bad, ungrateful creatures! After I brought them here, and was giving them such a good time, for them to disgrace me in this way. My mind is made up; I shall take them home next week. Meanwhile—meanwhile, I shall drown my feelings in a good, rousing, violent, club-breaking game of golf. *[Exit.*

MISS D. I hope I exaggerated sufficiently. They think I won't remember this morning, but I know well enough that that Kansas idiot chucked me under the chin, and Milly O'Naire locked me up in the kitchen, and then told me a mouse was there. I feel a little stiff this morning. "Ah, how sad that youth should vanish with the rose." Now I must hurry up and find Mr. Breyfogle and tell him all about it. I know he will be horrified. I guess I will have more chance with him after Mrs. O'Naire has taken those girls home. *[Exit R.*

Enter through kitchen at R., MRS. WILDWOOD, MARIGOLD and MILLY, all talking volubly. Go about rearranging place, but stop frequently to yawn, etc.

MILLY (C.). Oh, we did have a time of it; but I have such a headache this morning, and I couldn't wake up Dodo, at all. She had her door locked. *(Makes face at a bottle.)*

MAR. Where is Madeline?

MILLY. Oh, don't you know? Go to the window and see.

MAR. *(from window)*. Why, there she is, off golfing with Mr. Breyfogle. Aunt Flossie is just plowing up the earth and raising clouds of dust trying to overtake them.

MILLY. I hope she will succeed, for Madeline's sake. It's

just disgraceful the way she works that man for candy. His sore back and his deaf ear must be better this morning. (MRS. WILDWOOD *remains in deep thought by table.*) What are you thinking about, Eva dear? Is it Reginald troubling you?

MRS. W. No, I am thinking how we are going to get even with those men.

MAR. (*at window L.*). Bravo! Go it, old girl! Aunt Flossie just made a hundred yard drive, and Madeline and Mr. Breyfogle have seen her coming, and are running to drive off again. (*Uses field glasses.*)

MILLY (C.). Yes, I want to get even with them too. We had a better time than we could have had if they had come, of course, but we must break their pride in some way, if it takes a pile driver.

MRS. W. Yes, that is what I think. We must break their pride. (*Pounds table.*)

MILLY. Now what would you suggest? We tried their stomachs, and that didn't work.

MAR. (*at window*). Oh, hurry up, Madeline, hurry. She lofted her ball in a bunker, and she and Mr. Breyfogle have been whacking at it the longest time. Now he looks back and sees Aunt Flossie getting ready to loft. That inspires him. Good! He is on the green. Good work!

MRS. W. (*to MILLY*). Don't touch my sore arm; you jumped on it last night. I have thought of a scheme. We will invite all the men we know to a leap year dance. Reginald always hated them profoundly. I have no doubt that the last one he attended hastened his death.

MILLY. Oh, won't it be fun; we'll have a leap year dance.

MAR. (*at window*). Go it, old girl!

MRS. W. Marigold is very trying this morning. She doesn't seem a bit tired. Yes, we will invite them to a leap year dance. We will reverse the usual order of things, and have just half as many girls as men, that will leave them wall flowers most of the evening.

MILLY. I wonder if they will enjoy sitting against walls with their chaperons, as much as we do. Oh joy! We are going to get ahead at last. (*Waves piece of sausage.*)

MAR. (*at window*). There! Aunt Flossie has overtaken them. She putted into the same hole before they holed out. Now she is talking to them. My, isn't she talking though. I'm glad I'm not there. I wonder what is the matter. There! Madeline is "sassing" back, and Mr. Breyfogle has sat down

on the ground, and is digging a hole with his cleek. What can be the matter?

(The three gather at window. While caddies come in and run off with bottles, etc. Tableau.)

CURTAIN

ACT III

SCENE.—*Corridor or hall outside of ballroom. A flight of steps leading up to door or window overlooking ballroom. Box of candy on steps. Dressing table L. Dance music is played softly throughout this act. DODO at L. C., is guarding a big pile of men's hats and overcoats. She is in her usual maid's costume. MARIGOLD, in full evening dress, appears at the door ; comes down steps and comes to front of stage.*

MAR. Oh, we are having more than fun. Dear me, I never knew before what fun men must have at a dance. This is heavenly ! One of those Mr. ——'s who are always in the swim, the one who never asked me to dance at the hops, looked so reproachfully at me, as I came out, because I wouldn't ask him for the next waltz. He was sitting all by himself and trying to look as if he didn't care.

(Puts up her shoe for DODO to tie.)

DODO. Oh, miss ! How can you be so cruel ?

MAR. I am not cruel. I am just acting like a man. You must not call me miss, Dodo, you must call me Mr. O'Naire. *(Looking at programme.)* Here it is nearly time for supper, and I've only danced with Mr. Breyfogle five times. I wonder where he is ?

(She goes about looking for him, and at last, while the others are talking, hurries across the stage, up the steps and into the ballroom again. Meanwhile voices have been heard in loud altercation, and MILLY and MADELINE come down steps together looking at programmes. Wave hand to MARIGOLD on seeing her.)

MILLY. Mr. Breyfogle told me he wasn't going to divide up another dance.

MAD. I don't care, I've had three with him anyway, and there are more to come. I have asked him for supper, too.

MILLY. Well, I don't care if you have. I always said you were greedy. Why don't you ask ——— to dance.

MAD. Because, I won't! He skipped one of mine at last week's hop to go down and get an orange phosphate.

MILLY. Well, you've got to give me one of your dances with the naval officer, you mean thing. He told me to tell you to.

MAD. He didn't.

MILLY. He did.

MAD. And he is the last new young man, too. (*Weeps.*)

MILLY. I wouldn't be such a baby.

MAD. You couldn't; you're too old!

MILLY. I'm going to find him and tell him you said you wouldn't give up one of his dances.

MAD. And I'm going to find him and ask him for another dance.

(*They turn their backs on each other, and run upstairs to ballroom.*)

DODO. There seems to be some quarreling going on here, and between them two girls as was callin' each other sweet-heart and darlin' such a short time ago. As long as they're men for to-night, I should guess they could have their own way for once. I just wish I could go into that ballroom. Wouldn't I show 'em! Wouldn't I just march down that ballroom floor, with my head high and my eyes haughty like, fixed on the ceilin', and not pay any attention to the wall flowers. No, not even if they got tired of waitin' and their mothers took 'em home. I'd just lean up against the wall, indifferent like, and not ask nobody to dance. Not I! I'd act as if I just got there on my looks. And after a while, I'd go out with some other fellow, of course, and take a real good pull at a long, long Mexican cigar. (*Takes money out of pocket.*) Mr. Breyfogle gave me this. (*Tosses it up and catches it.*) I guess it's all right. It's only a nickel. Ain't he a pincher, though? But he ain't stingy about everything. No, indeed, he ain't. Wouldn't those girls in there just have blue blazes cat fits with hot pepper in their eyes, and cataleptic convulsions on the half shell if they knew that their lovely, darlin' Mr. Sutherland Breyfogle, United States Navy, kissed me? (*Whirls around on toes and strikes attitude.*) Yes, I have been kissed by Mr. Sutherland Breyfogle! But then, I'll bet I'm not the only one. (*Winks.*) There are others!

(MISS DARWIN *walks down the steps in very good spirits, smiling and throwing a kiss coquettishly back into the ball-room.*)

MISS D. (*simpering*). Oh, dear, I never had such a really lovely time in my life. I am such a belle this evening. The men cannot skip my dances, because, of course, they cannot walk across the floor unless some girl (*goes to seat L.*) takes them, and there arn't enough to go around. In the words of our beloved Shakespeare, "Something always comes to him who waits," and I have waited forty years to have a good time at a dance. (*Sits L.*) At last! At last!

DODO. Don't none of them refuse to dance with you, miss?

MISS D. Oh, are you there, Dodo? (*Rises.*) No, indeed, they don't; they are afraid to. That nice Mr.—— looked at me as if he were going to run away, but I saw he hesitated, and he who hesitates, you know, Dodo, is lost.

DODO. Well, when he gave me his hat to hold, so nice and pleasant like, little did he know the awful things which was going to happen to him this evening, in that very room there.

MISS D. Have you seen that new man, (*looks at programme*) Mr. Livermore, about here anywhere? I am looking for him. My next dance is with him. (*Looking about with lorgnette.*)

DODO. Yes, ma'am, he went awalking and atalking with the widow a while ago—off that way!

(MISS DARWIN *goes in that direction, as MRS. WILDWOOD comes down the steps, smiling.*)

MRS. W. Oh, Dodo, you dear little thing, it is such fun in there. We have them completely at our mercy. I haven't had such a crack-a-jack time since the days of old B—— St. school, when we used to slide down the hill on wooden sleds. Do you remember? You fell and broke your nose, and the teacher whipped me with a ruler once because I wrote an excuse saying I was ill, and signed my own name. (*Goes to dressing table, uses powder on face, etc.*) All the young men in there have to sit against the wall until a girl asks them to dance. They can't even cross the room to the punch bowl, or promenade in the corridor unless a girl takes them. They look so sweet and dependent, hoping to be taken for a glass of punch. Those Misses O'Naire are silly, though, even if they are going

away so soon, they ought not to have allowed me to influence them to act so scandalously. They are all three running after Mr. Breyfogle in the most open manner, when I especially told them to be careful and not enrage those other men too far. Even worms turn.

DODO. Oh, Eva, you was always such a clever one. It's a wonder Reg ever had the heart to die. (*Seated on steps.*)

MRS. W. Well, he had heart enough for anything.

DODO (*rising from steps*). Oh, Eva, give me your programme. I ain't havin' no fun out here watching these old coats. Ain't that a peach?

(*Holds up a ragged one.*)

MRS. W. Oh! whose is that? Here, take my programme. All salaries are not alike to me, and the owner of that overcoat isn't even worth asking to dance.

(*MRS. WILDWOOD now goes through coats, finding collars, curling irons, and other absurd things in them, while DODO reads her programme aloud, which must consist of real names and local hits. This little scene to be long or short to suit actors and circumstances.*)

DODO (*last reading from programme*). S. Sutherland Breyfogle. Why, how did you get a dance with him? You *are* smart.

MRS. W. Oh, he saved one for me. What's this? (*Holding up manuscript.*)

DODO. Oh, that must be ———'s coat. He's writing a novel on girls' boating clubs. His heroine swims nine miles, climbs a mountain, wins the golf championship, rescues two men, three women, five children, two dogs and a chicken from drowning all in one day.

MRS. W. If that is true to life, I don't believe I will join a rowing club.

DODO. Why not, Eva; haven't you been asked?

MRS. W. Of course, Professor Burks asked me as soon as I came; but I am afraid I would find Reg too soon at that rate; I couldn't survive so much exercise.

(*Loud cries, outside "No, No; please stop. Yes, I will, etc."* The three girls come flying down the steps.)

MILLY. I told him he couldn't just as soon as he began.

MAD. Yes, I just gave him an awful push over to his seat, but he wouldn't take it.

MAR. I had hold of his coat tails, but I couldn't stir him. He must have nails in his heels.

MILLY. They sounded like rubber.

MAD. Oh, Mrs. Wildwood, do make them stop.

MRS. W. Why, girls, what is it?

MILLY. That obstinate ——— insists upon getting up and dancing with another man.

MAD. I told him it was against the rule. (*Noise outside.*)

MILLY. If he isn't stopped, he'll spoil our party; every man will be up there dancing without the girls, and we will be wall flowers after all.

MAD. (*walking up and down*). Oh, stop him, stop him.

MAR. But don't use force.

DODO. Force, is it? (*Rolling up sleeves.*) Well, you just wait till I get in there. I wasn't trained in a girls' debating society for nothing. I'll be the Sergeant at Arms.

(AUNT FLOSSIE *appears at doorway in strange apparel—golf skirt and party waist.*)

MAR. Why, Aunt Flossie! How strange you look. Don't you think you are very queerly dressed for our party?

AUNT F. I don't care. I don't care any more than I do for a single player on the golf course. I made such a fizzle of my last drive, this afternoon, that I hadn't the heart to dress up much. But as the floor manager of this mixed doubles arrangement,—those young men in there say they will be good balls,—I mean men,—if you will come back. And they are stymied over with hunger. They say they want their suppers.

MRS. W. Well, they can have it very soon, if they are good, and do as they are told. I'll go and say to them that we are going to have only doughnuts and coffee, and perhaps they won't be in such a hurry for their supper.

[*Exit up steps.*]

AUNT F. In my character of floor manager, I have been trying to keep those young men from dancing except when the girls asked them. And I found one lonely young man dancing all by himself, and he wouldn't listen to me, but sliced every step. To be sure, I was putting in a corner of the ball-room—there's my ball—and then I put out—here, but now I think I'll put back.

[*Exit up steps.*]

MILLY. Oh! Aunt Flossie! Dodo, you go up and watch, and don't let any of them come out.

DODO. Well, I guess not. They've got to get their tickets of leave from me. (*Rolling up sleeves.*)

(DODO goes up and sits down on steps looking in doorway.)

MILLY. Now we can have a nice time out here and a good rest, just as if we were really the men.

MAD. Yes, and swagger up and down the way they do, because they only have to dance when their Royal Highnesses please to. It is nice to be able to ask just whom one wants to for a dance. I don't blame them for being somewhat stuck up over it. I feel like that myself to-night.

MILLY. Say, old fellow, have a cigar? (*Slapping her on shoulder.*)

(MARIGOLD puts on some of the coats and hats.)

MAD. Don't say such horrid things even in fun, Milly O'Naire; you're perfectly shocking.

MILLY. 'I don't care if I am. I don't care what happens to me. We have to go home this week. Isn't it mean of Aunt Flossie, just when Mr. Breyfogle is getting so attached to me.

MAR. }
and } What!
MAD. }

MILLY. Well, there is no knowing what would happen if I stayed here much longer. He might win me in spite of myself. I'll tell you what I'll do, girls. I'll bet you a new silk hat against a watermelon, I shall get a brass button for my collection from Ensign B.

DODO. Oh, missus, Mr. —— is sitting all alone. (*From top of steps, looking in ballroom.*)

MAD. We don't care! And I'll bet you a box of Ingersoll's candy against a, —a—copy of the Sun, that I will have one too.

MAR. (*with man's hat and coat on*). You always seem to leave me out,—as if I had no influence with Mr. Breyfogle. I bet you a horseless carriage against a kissing bug that I get two from him this very night.

(*Music is heard. MARIGOLD and MILLY waltz.*)

DODO. Oh, missus! Miss Darwin's got, —— . She's

got him, she's got him. She's a dancing with him. She goes up and down like a cork in the water. Oh, she's stepped on his toes, and he's stopped right in the middle of the floor holding on to his shoe. Ha!—ha!—ha! Oh, he's a trying to get away.

(All laugh while DODO comes down. MARIGOLD goes up steps to see, and MILLY exit L. MADELINE exit R. DODO remains C., laughing.)

DODO. And to see Miss Darwin hanging to his arm, and a coquettin' and coquettin' with him, as if she was his choice, and he a tryin' to be so polite. I believe he'd rather dance with *me* than with that Miss Cornelia Brownell Darwin.

Enter MADELINE weeping.

DODO. What's the matter, miss?

MAD. Mr. —— says he won't dance a waltz with *me* because I two-step so much better than I waltz, and I told him he would have to waltz with me or not at all. Oh, I was very firm.

DODO. Are you going to waltz with him, then, miss?

MAD. No, he was very firm, too. And now he is sitting there looking just as pathetic. *(Weeps.)*

DODO. Well, you can two-step with him after supper.

MAD. No, I've engaged all my dances, and he has always been so polite to me. Why, once when I danced with him at a party, he clapped so hard they encored the dance.

DODO. That was real polite of him, miss.

MAD. Yes, and now I haven't even a two-step left for him. And I was so mean about it too. Poor fellow. *(Weeps.)*

Enter MARIGOLD L., carrying large glass of water.

DODO. Oh, I say Miss Marigold. Where is it yer goin' with that barrel of water?

MAR. It's for Mr. ——, Dodo; he says he's tired.

(Disappears again up steps.)

DODO *(sitting down)*. This sassiety business is a queer job, a queer job. I'd rather look on than be in it. *(Exit MAD.)* I don't think my nerves would stand it.

(MISS DARWIN comes down C., weeping.)

DODO. Oh, you poor old thing, what is the matter with you?

MISS D. Oh, nothing, nothing. I suppose I ought to be so used to disappointments that I wouldn't know them when I see them. But I still have the feelings of a rosebud.

DODO. Who did it?

MISS D. Didn't I tell you that I had never been kissed? It isn't that, but I—I—asked Mr. Breyfogle to be my husband. I said in the most respectful way,—“Oh! be mine.” And he said, “No; decidedly no,”—that on no account would he be mine. That his mind was made up on the matter, and that I must never, never, never, never, speak of it to him again. (*Weeps.*)

DODO (*laughing*). Oh, oh, oh, oh!

MISS D. But they say that (*sighs*) in time absence makes the heart grow fonder, and perhaps after I am gone, he will remember me and sigh for me.

DODO. I tell you, Miss Darwin, it's your only hope. If he forgets you he might take you, but as long as he remembers you, no—and I says it as always gives good advice to maiden ladies. Don't you cry for him no more. I think he's nothing but an ordinary double back-action flirt. I've a mind to go right in there and tell him what I think of him.

MISS D. Oh, don't. I suppose he has a perfect right to refuse to wed me, if he wishes to. But of one thing I am quite sure; I shall never, never propose to a man again. It was a most terrible experience. Why, I was so agitated, not a quotation came to me; and I think I am glad he did refuse me. Why, Dodo, if he had accepted me, it would have been very embarrassing for me, and with all the other young men in the ballroom looking on too. It might have caused a number of duels.

DODO. Yes, that's so; it might, ma'am. They might have got jealous of him, you a preferrin' him so. Why is it that them flirts is always so mortal attractive? I wonder who's got him now? (*Goes to steps and looks in.*) Why, he isn't anywhere to be seen. I suppose they've got him somewhere begging him for brass buttons. (*Waves her hand gaily.*) No, I'm not dancing to-night, Mr. ———, my misses were so hard-hearted as they wouldn't let me. (*MISS D. opens up book and begins to read. DODO coming down.*) What's that you're readin', Miss Cornelia Brownell Darwin? If I might make so bold,—me as is always so afraid of elegant ladies.

MISS D. I am reading “How to be Happy though Mar-

ried." It is one of the most consoling books I have ever found.

DODO. I'll bet, ma'am, it can't touch "Light Fingered Sal, The Pride of the Plain." Why, ma'am, that book just knocks the spots out of all those "Gadfllys" and "David Harums" and "Darkest Africa" and "Farthest North Pole" and "Lightest Asias" them young ladies read. (*Sits down beside her.*)

MISS D. Does it, indeed?

DODO. Yes, it does, and that ain't no lie. Oh, I'm very literary, miss. I read through seven books in one day once, and cried over 'em all; and then I got down and scrubbed two floors to relieve my feelin's, ma'am.

MISS D. You did?

DODO. Yes, ma'am, I did; and don't you forget it. But this Light Fingered Sal, she beats 'em all, she did. She killed three deputy sheriffs, broke jail twice, and married the catch of the place, Tight-fisted Tom, the rich man who hadn't no money to spend. Oh, it was a fine book. When I grow up now, Miss ———. (*Stands up.*)

MISS D. Grow up, Dodo.

DODO. Yes, ma'am, when I finish gettin' my growth, I'm a goin' to get married. I'm a goin' to borrow some of Eva Wildwood's best clothes, and give a party and make a match. None of your make excuses, kiss in the dark, like everybody the same, Sutherland Breyfogles for me,—no, indeed. *I'm* goin' to do the flirting in *my* family.

MISS D. Ah, Dodo, you remind me that failure, not low aim, is crime. Whom do *you* wish to marry?

DODO. That man who drives the 'bus for the hotel, ma'am; and won't I have fun, ridin' out Sundays with him.

(AUNT FLOSSIE *appears at head of steps again.*)

AUNT F. (*wringing hands*). Oh, those dreadful girls! Those dreadful unkeep-trackable girls! They are so cruel. I am so glad those poor young men have something to eat at last. It was really pitiful to see them put up their hands for the ice cream. But now the girls are all squabbling over Mr. Breyfogle, as to who shall drive off for the next dance. I shall be so glad to get them away from here. But I wanted to stay longer myself. Why, I expected to break Mrs. ———'s golf record next week. By the way, Miss Darwin, I haven't so much confidence in widows as I did have.

Miss D. Nor I. I know she has been setting dear Sutherland against me.

(The three girls come excitedly down steps, wearing enormous brass buttons.)

MILLY. When he gave me mine, he said, "Hoping you will always keep it bright in memory of my devotion."

MAD. With mine he said, "I am yours always, and as long after as you care to know me. There is only one girl in this world for me," and then he looked so meaningly at me.

MAR. He said to me, "Take these buttons with my love, and if any other girl says she has any of mine, don't believe her."

MAD. }
and } The horrid thing!
MILLY }

(MRS. WILDWOOD appears at door.)

MRS. W. Oh, you are all here I see. *(Comes down steps.)* I have only a minute to spare, but I wish to tell you—the very first—you have all been so nice to him. Mr. Breyfogle and I have just become engaged, and I want you to stay over for the wedding. Please don't refuse, my dear Mrs. O'Naire, and you too, Miss Darwin. You see it's the palmist's fault. She said I was to marry a hero, and Reg was nothing of the sort, you know. Oh, Dodo, I am so happy! *(They embrace.)*

DODO *(extricating herself)*. I'm sure I hope you'll enjoy him, Eva Wildwood, you as drove one husband to his death already. *(Turns back.)*

AUNT F. Dodo! *(To MRS. WILDWOOD.)* Of all the unexpected, remarkable, unlooked for scores, this beats all, and wins the game. Well, you are a record breaker, Mrs. Wildwood, and I congratulate you.

Miss D. I hope you will be happy, Mrs. Wildwood, but I am not exactly sure. "All that glitters is not gold." I will remain for the wedding with pleasure; and oh,—ah,—my dear Mrs. Wildwood, have you selected a bridesmaid yet?

MRS. W. How can you ask? I wish these dear girls, just my own age, to support me on that trying occasion.

MILLY. We will, we will, Eva! There are plenty more fish in the sea.

MAR. Yes, he is not the only pebble.

MAD. *(wiping eyes)*. I prefer Mr. ———, anyway.

(All join in fancy square dance, singing, to tune of "I Doubt It.")

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Yes, the laughing American girl.

You say we can't love if we laugh all the time!
A laugh at your logic we'll hurl;
We love while we laugh, and we laugh while we love,
The laughing American girl
Oh, the laughing American girl.

(At close, DODO C., with flag; others in tableau.)

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